

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 2 are amended and claim 4 is canceled. Claim 2 is amended to overcome a claim objection.

No new matter is added to the application by this Amendment. Support for the features added to claims 1 and 2 is found in the specification, as originally filed, at, for example, the first full paragraph on page 8.

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

I. Claim Objection

Claims 2 and 4 were objected to as allegedly being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim.

In view of the cancellation of claim 4, this rejection is moot with respect to that claim.

Applicant has amended claim 2 such that the claim is directed to a method for producing a composite synthetic resin composition by adding, to a liquid synthetic resin, first inorganic or organic fiber filaments having a length of 1 micron to 500 microns sequentially in order of increasing length. Claim 2 is in proper dependent form.

Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the objection to the claim.

II. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0170436 to Keefer et al. (hereinafter "Keefer"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Patent Office acknowledges that Keefer fails to disclose that the amount of the organic/polymeric fibers are 1-150 microns in length (see page 3 of the Office Action). The

Patent Office alleges that experimental modification of this prior art in order to ascertain optimum operating conditions fails to render Applicants' claims patentable in the absence of unexpected results. Additionally, the Patent Office alleges that at the time of the invention a person having ordinary skill in the art would have found it obvious to optimize the amount of organic/polymeric fibers of 1-150 microns in length and would have been motivated to do so to control the viscosity of the composition to make it more workable. Applicant respectfully disagrees with these allegations.

Nowhere does Keefer teaches or suggests a liquid synthetic resin that is selected from the group consisting of epoxy synthetic resin, urethane synthetic resin, polyurethane synthetic resin, vinyl ester synthetic resin, polyester synthetic resin, acrylic synthetic resin, and phenolic synthetic resin as required by claims 1 and 2. The liquid synthetic resin according to claims 1 and 2 is selected from the above-identified liquid synthetic resins which are **non-polar** liquid synthetic resins.

To the contrary, Keefer teaches a slurry composition containing an adsorbent and/or catalytic material (such as zeolite), a binder such as colloidal silica, and a **polar** organic liquid (such as water or alcohol) for suspending solids (see paragraph [0015] and the Abstract of Keefer).

It appears that the Patent Office is alleging that the "liquid suspending agent" of Keefer teaches or suggests the claimed "liquid synthetic resin" of the present application. In Keefer, the expression "liquid suspending agent" appears only in the Abstract, issued claim 1, and paragraph [0012] of Keefer. Moreover, it appears that the liquid of the liquid suspending agent is specifically described in paragraphs [0062] and [0063] of Keefer as follows:

[0062] Water, polar organic liquids, and mixtures thereof are useful for suspending slurry solids. Water is a primary liquid useful for forming suitable slurries. Although not necessary, organic materials help the formulation and coating process, and may interact with the binder material to facilitate the binding activity of the binder, and hence the formation of a stronger matrix for retaining the adsorbent material.

[0063] While a number of different organic materials optionally may be used, alcohols have been used in the disclosed embodiments. Particularly useful are aliphatic alcohols having 10 or fewer carbon atoms, referred to herein as lower alcohols. Most typically, the aliphatic alcohols are lower alkyl alcohols. Disclosed embodiments generally used isopropyl alcohol.

It is well known that water is a **polar** solvent. Thus, the liquid for "liquid suspending agent" of Keefer, which includes water and/or polar organic solvents, does not teach or suggest a liquid synthetic resin which is a **non-polar** liquid synthetic resin and selected from the group consisting of epoxy synthetic resin, urethane synthetic resin, polyurethane synthetic resin, vinyl ester synthetic resin, polyester synthetic resin, acrylic synthetic resin, and phenolic synthetic resin as required by claims 1 and 2.

Because these features of independent claims 1 and 2 are not taught or suggested by Keefer, taken singly or in combination, these references would not have rendered the features of claims 1 and 2 obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art.

For at least these reasons, claims 1-3 are patentable over the applied references. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition

for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-3 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Early and favorable action is earnestly solicited.

CONDITIONAL PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME

If entry and consideration of the amendments above requires an extension of time, Applicant respectfully requests that this be considered a petition therefor. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any fee(s) due in this connection to Deposit Account No. 14-1263.

ADDITIONAL FEE

Please charge any insufficiency of fees, or credit any excess, to Deposit Account No. 14-1263.

Respectfully submitted,

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